

Coalition of CT Sportsmen

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Oppose: [S.B. No. 227](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CECIL'S LAW. (ENV)

Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis and distinguished members of the Environment Committee.

Growing up I learned that conservation is the wise use of natural resources. The proposed legislation is not conservation, it is, plain and simple, anti-hunting. I believe that all poachers should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) states that, "The African Elephant Conservation Act (AECA), Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Convention on International Trade in Endanger Species (CITES) allow the non-commercial import of sport-hunted trophies as long as certain conditions are met. We believe that well-regulated and managed sport hunting can contribute to conservation by putting much needed revenue back into protected area management, anti-poaching and other important conservation activities."

These hunts are regulated not only the FWS but also by the host government. Permits must be made in advance and they are rather expensive. The process also ensures that imported specimens are legally obtained in range countries as part of a scientifically sound management program that benefits the subspecies in the wild. In addition, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) strictly enforces the importation of these trophies. These require more permits and admittance through regulated/limited ports.

The proper utilization of well-managed populations provides an important source of funding for all conservation programs. The FWS also states, "The Service found that sport-hunting, if well managed, may provide a benefit to the subspecies. Well-managed conservation programs use trophy hunting revenues to sustain species conservation, research and anti-poaching activities. However, the Service found that not all trophy hunting programs are scientifically based or managed in a sustainable way. So in addition to protecting both species under the ESA, we created a permitting mechanism to support and strengthen the accountability of conservation programs in other nations. This rule will allow for the importation of the threatened *Panthera leo melanochaita*, including sport-hunted trophies, from countries with established conservation programs and well-managed lion populations."

The FWS clearly regulates all aspects of the proposed legislation. The FWS looks at the overall management program for a species in each country. Factors considered include: the biological needs of the species; possible threats to the populations; and current population estimates, quotas, management plans, legal protection, local community involvement, and use of hunting fees for conservation. Facts dictate sound wildlife management, not public opinion.

The field is filled. The proposed language is in conflict with the federal government and only reduces efforts to save the animals we all want to save. Thank you.